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COMMUNITY BASED LIVELIHOOD DEVELOPMENT (CBLD) FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN: HORTICULTURE MIDLINE SURVEY

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COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT NO. AID 674-A-12-00003



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ACRONYMS

CBLD	Community Based Livelihood and Development
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
HVC	Horticulture Value Chain
SBCC	Social Behavior Change Communications
SRH	Sexual Reproductive Health
TNS	TechnoServe

Community Based Livelihood Development (CBLD) for Women and Children: HORTICULTURE midline survey

1 INTRODUCTION

Community Based Livelihoods Development (CBLD) for Women and Children in Swaziland is a five-year cooperative agreement between USAID and FHI 360, which is supported through our implementing partner Techno Serve, Inc. CBLD integrates livelihoods, gender equality, and child protection interventions with community development approaches to achieve sustainable improvements in the social and economic well-being of women and children in communities in Swaziland.

CBLD implements and supports holistic programming that includes: Education (early childhood education and development, linkages to vocational training/education), Psychosocial support (community caregiver support including Child Protection Networks (CPNs), Rural Health Motivators (RHMs), Lihlombe Lekukhalela (LLs) and other caregivers; Household Economic Strengthening (savings groups, financial literacy, enterprise development, farming as a business and value chain support); Health and Nutrition (nutrition, education, care and support trainings, perma-gardening, community to clinic referral systems); Child Protection and Gender Based Violence programs (education and advocacy for children's rights and appropriate programming, gender norms and legal education clinics); and Legal Protection (birth registrations, improving access to legal services, legal education clinics and high level advocacy for children's and women's rights.). All programming incorporates systems strengthening, access to relevant HIV and Health services and capacity building as key outcomes.

Within the CBLD program, value chain development focuses on increasing the income earning potential of vulnerable households, including female-headed households and those caring for OVC and living with HIV, by introducing them to value chains or improving their position within those value chains.

2 SURVEY RATIONALE

Specific objective:

To evaluate the sustainability of horticulture production with Herefords and Ndzingeni farmers under the CBLD Program.

CBLD has been implementing the horticulture value chain programming in Herefords and Ndzingeni since February 2013 and August 2014 respectively. Through this work the project has provided technical assistance and training in areas of farm planning, planting, record keeping, marketing, profit/loss, harvesting, etc. and has provided more hands on support in drafting and reviewing contracts with the Swaziland National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBoard is mandated to improve agricultural production, processing, storage, transportation, distribution and sale of both baby and conventional vegetables particularly to smallholder farmers).

A baseline survey was conducted in 2013 to the 35 farmers, a random sample selected from the project's initial participants. This baseline (and planned subsequent midline and end line) was initiated as a monitoring tool to support programming decisions and determine effectiveness in the value chain component. The information collected at each project stage will be used to help build the evidence base on household economic strengthening programs, potential impacts on the livelihoods and food security of vulnerable households.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling

At the time of the evaluation there were 35 horticulture value chain participants. CBLD determined there were sufficient funds to capture all horticulture value chain participants (n=35) due to the manageable number and the expected benefits from capturing the household level information.

All value chain participants were eligible for the survey, however, each had to provide informed consent prior to taking part in the survey.

3.2 Survey Instrument

A questionnaire was developed for all CBLD VC interventions. It was then adapted to the specific VC, irrespective of community. Data was collected by CBLD trained enumerators.

The midline survey was modified to capture observations made during program implementation and to reflect programming recommendations made during the CBLD mid-term evaluation (Oct 2014).

These modifications included:

- Adding questions that requested information about household members by sex and age, required respondents to be in position to know the dependants of each farmer.
- Person making final decision on the use of profits made during sales

3.3 Survey Implementation

Farmers were identified through the CBLD database, and were contacted prior to the survey to limit the rate of non-response and invited to a training session where interviews were conducted. The survey managed to elicit 100% response rate. However the data collection device mis-presented data for seven farmers. They were all contacted again to give their responses, and one farmer could not be reached.

The CBLD data collection team consisted of seven enumerators, with one identified as a lead enumerator and they conducted household visits. Mobile data collection was the main method to ensure ease of data collection.

3.3.1 Questionnaire Content

1. Demographics

- Farmers name, sex, and contact details
- Farmers education background
- Farmers list of household members

2. Horticulture Production Season

- Amount received from sales made
- Comparison of sales made in 2013 and 2014
- Decision Making on the profits made from the sales
- Usage of the money received from sales

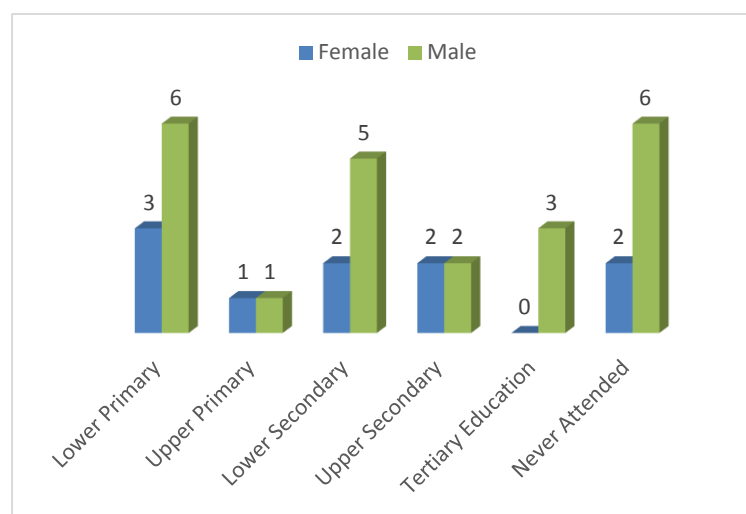
4 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A total of 34 farmers were reached during the midline survey out of the 35 farmers that CBLD has active in the horticulture value chain (HVC): 71% (24) of the farmers are male and 29% (10) are the female farmers enrolled in the value chain. Out of the 35, 17 farmers (7 females and 10 males) had no previous experience in farming prior to working with CBLD, indicating a 49% conversion rate.

4.1 Education

It is worth noting that 23% (8) of the farmers have never attended any formal education and 76% (26) of the farmers have some form of education. One farmer has reported to have attended the Sebenta classes (adult education) to learn how to read and write in siSwati language and three farmers have tertiary education as their highest attainment. One of the farmers has tertiary education background, is the youngest farmer in the value chain (26 years) while the oldest farmer is 71 years old and has never received any formal education.

Graph 1: Number of Horticulture farmers by level of education

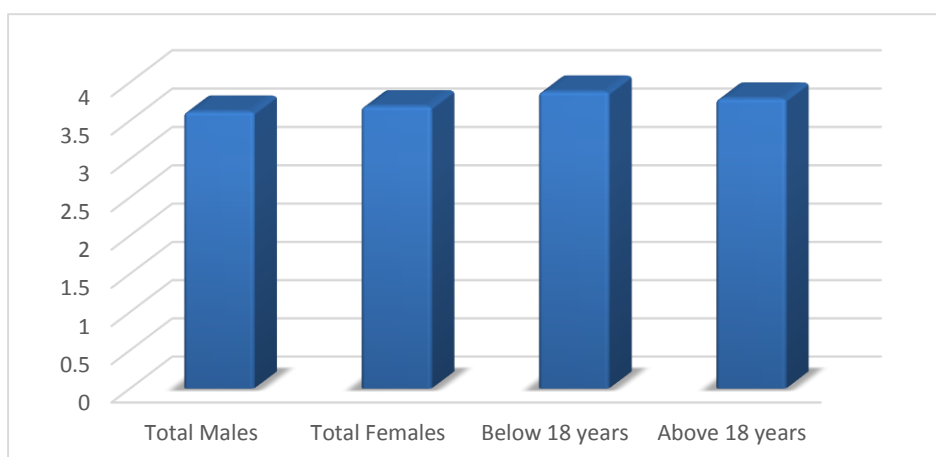


4.2 Household

The HVC program engages 34 households that support a total of 253 household members (128 are below 18). Those under 18 are considered a part of the program's indirect beneficiaries. On average, there are 7 persons living in a household with about equal numbers of males (3.6) and females (3.7). Similarly, on

average the households are composed of equal numbers of persons below (3.9) and above 18 years (3.8) of age.

Graph 2: Average CBLD HVC household



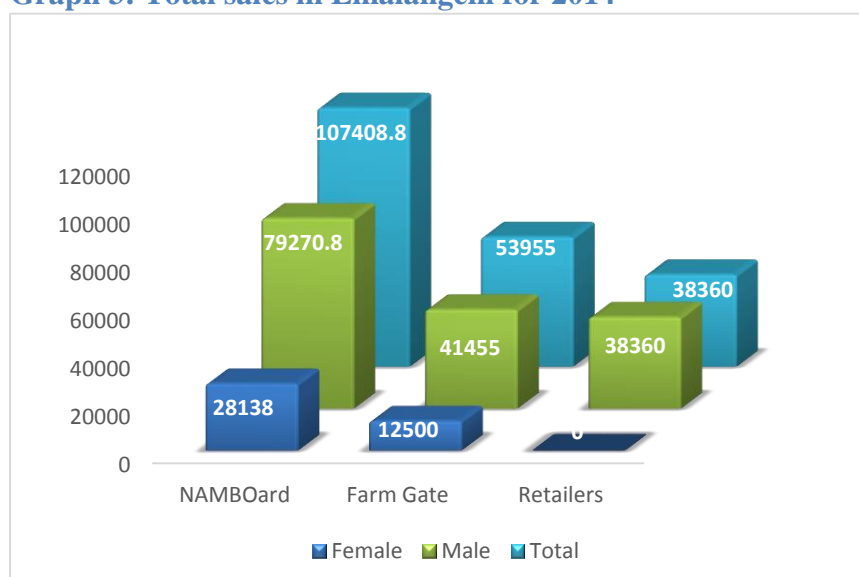
5 HORTICULTURE PRODUCTION

5.1 Farm produce sales

Total 2014 sales amounted to E292,038 of farm production of different crops (cabbages, lettuce, butternut and green beans), and for the 2013 season only three of the six farmers were able to harvest and made sales of E2 100.00. Some farmers sold their produce to more than 1 market: 9 sold to NAMBoard and farm gate while 2 sold at farm gate and retailers and 2 sold to NAMBoard and retailers.

Farmers reported earning an average of E7, 672 (n=5) when selling to retailers compared to an average of E4, 585 (n=22) when selling to the NAMBoard and E3, 081 when they sold at farm gate (n=18). On average, the farmers that sold directly to retailers were all male and they earned more. Transport and packaging costs were not included in this figure and farmers that sell to retailers cover their own transport costs as compared to those that sell to NAMBoard who collects produce from farmers.

Graph 3: Total sales in Emalangeneni for 2014



Most respondents reported earning more in 2014 compared to 2013 (73.6%), of those 41% stated that had “no sell in 2013”. 17 of the 25 that reported “no sell in 2013” were new to the project. However, 24% (14) reported earning less in 2014. In total the respondents hired 26 (17 females and 9 males)

workers in their horticulture operation in 2014, paying an average of E30.30 per day.

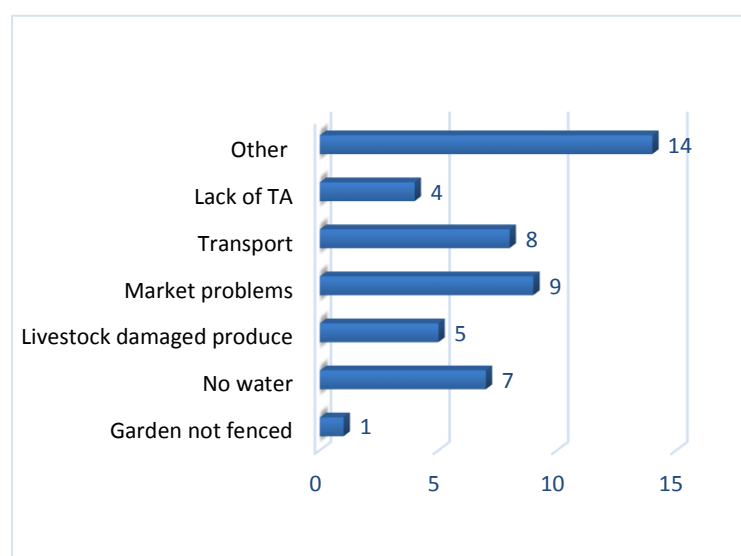
Table 1: Sales comparison for 2013 and 2014

How do 2014 sales compare to the amount of money you earned from selling in 2013?		
	Frequency	Percent
Less	8	23.5
More	11	32.4
Same	1	2.9
No sell in 2013	14	41.2

5.2 Farmer's challenges

When asked if they encountered problems selling their produce in 2014, 74% (25) of the respondents reported encountering problems. As shown in the graph below, the problems encountered ranged widely with many reporting water, market and transport problems. Among additional problems farmers encountered, some reported problems associated with NAMBoard and availability of insecticide (see the 'Other' table).

Graph 4: Problems encountered by farmers while selling their produce to NAMBoard



MARKET	Table 2: Other challenges highlighted by farmers
NAMBoard delays in taking our produce resulting in lot of damages	
Unavailability of market	
FINANCE	
Lack of money to buy insecticides	
Not being paid	
Not getting the expected amount from buyer	
TECHNICAL	
Fire destroyed everything	
Lot of damages	
Goods stolen (sugar cane)	
No pipes	
Lack of pesticides	
Insects affect the produce	
Hailstorm	
Infertile soil	
Soil was not good [acidity]	

5.3 Decision on use of profits gained from horticulture sales

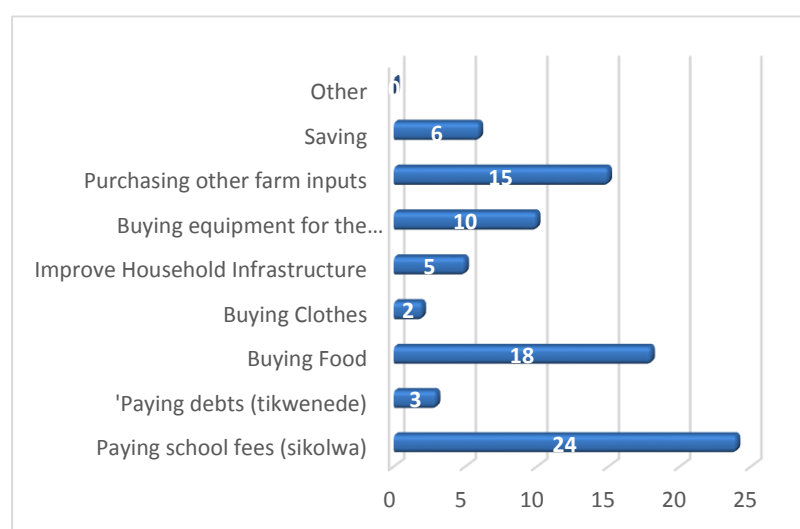
The majority of the respondents themselves made the decision on how to use the profits. Most use the profit from the horticulture production to buy food, pay school fees and purchase additional equipment for the horticulture production or to buy other farming inputs. Noted is that 10 (29%) females are in a position to make decisions on any profits gained from any produce made, and only one male farmer reported to be making joint decisions.

Table 3: Decision making on the use of profits earned

Table 2: Who made the final decision on how to use profits made from sales				
	Frequency	Percent	Female	Male
My Husband	2	5.9	2	0
My Wife	2	5.9	0	2
Myself	27	79.4	8	19
Other (Jointly, N/A)	3	5.8	0	3

Farmers use their horticulture profits to improve and provide for daily household maintenance, as 24 (71%) stated that they use their profits to pay for schools fees meaning they care for the school going children. In addition, 18 (53%) shared that they purchase household food. Key highlight attesting to sustainability is that 25 (74%) of the farmers use their profits to improve their farming activities.

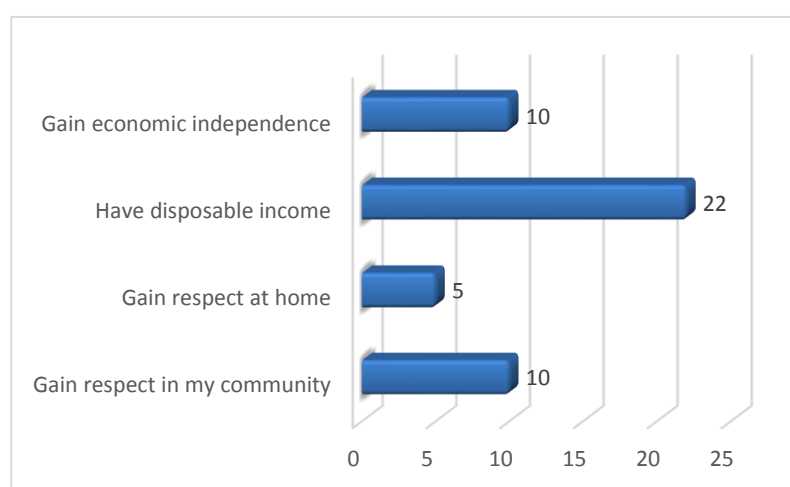
Graph 5: Uses of profit earned by HVC farmers



5.4 Community Based Livelihood Development assistance to farmers

Respondents said CBLD has enabled them to have more disposable income and gain economic independence.

Graph 6: Livelihoods development through CBLD interventions



6 DISCUSSION

The CBLD horticulture value chain has had a high new farmer conversion rate (49%), indicated by the number of farmers who had no previous experience in farming recruited into the program. From the survey results, it is evident that there is significant need to continue with intensive mentoring and coaching as these new farmers require continuous field inspection, record keeping monitoring, troubleshooting and support.

All the farmers who sold directly to retailers were male. This is symptomatic of the skewed male ownership of resources and factors of production. Men are more likely to have access to private transportation to reach markets that are out of women's reach. This continues to offer NAMBoard as a desirable market since the organization collects produce in the most far

flung areas. This necessitates that CBLD strengthens this market linkage as the most sustainable to benefit the small scale farmer in the long term. However, in order to effect this, there needs to be better communication between NAMBoard and the farmers.

Of the 34 farmers interviewed, 26 workers were hired during the season. 17 of those hired were women further reaching CBLD's intended target population. It should be noted that there is a significant level of undocumented and unpaid labor in the horticulture value chain that is derived from the farmers' family who ultimately benefit from the horticulture enterprise.

The demographic data highlights that the HVC program engages 34 households that support a total of 253 household members with almost equal gender and individuals under 18 represented. The structure of these households presents opportunities for the household members to engage in complementary CBLD programming.

A majority of the farmers made individual decisions about the use of money earned from horticulture, with a significant number becoming more proactive in their decision making. This is evident in the farmers exploiting higher risk and higher return opportunities by dedicating more land to horticulture, investing more into the purchase of additional equipment and other farming inputs. Ultimately this is moving this population along the pathway toward lower vulnerability and higher opportunity to diversify their income streams.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Refresher trainings

During the survey it was noted that farmers reported that they receive more income when selling to retailers than NAMBoard or farm gate. It is apparent that farmers have tended not to discern the pros and cons of selling to each market and factor in transport and packaging costs associated with selling to each market.

It is recommended that continuous refresher trainings on record keeping, cost analysis and profit calculation are conducted to assist farmers in understanding their profit drivers in order to improve their decision making and pricing strategies. This training could also encourage collaboration between the farmers to plant at different schedules and avoid creating produce gluts that drive down the bargaining power of the farmers and result in lower prices.

7.2 NAMBoard communication tool

Delayed collection of produce by NAMBoard leads to loss of quality and post-harvest losses which result in loss of income. Therefore it is recommended that CBLD should strengthen the communication link between NAMBoard and farmers in order to improve logistics behind produce collection and general farm management. To this end, NAMBoard should be pursued to engage in an SMS program that will be used to disseminate horticulture relevant information, including collection schedules and weekly buying prices. Ideally after signing marketing contracts with farmers, NAMBoard Marketing Extension Officer (MEO) should develop a validation exercise to confirm what is planted by the farmers and record expected harvesting dates in order to forecast possible harvesting and collection days and submit to the marketing and logistics officer at the packhouse.

7.3 Saving groups

The survey highlights that the farmers interviewed reported that they have more disposable income, it is therefore recommended that they are trained in savings groups as a means to assist them have future cash that will assist their business withstand business risks such loss of income due to theft, hailstorm, livestock and fire damages. Moreover, the savings will assist the farmers to have enough income for the business expansion including increasing area under production, hire more labour and diversify into other enterprises such honey.

7.4 Improved data capture

It is proposed that the CBLD program improve its method of capturing the impacts of the interventions. In order to do so, it is recommended that CBLD team establish and agree on tools to capture farm gate sales, worker data, family labor and a market rate for their labor. Technoserve Business Advisors should then make a concerted effort to routinely check and ensure that farmer records are updated. It is also recommended that the baselines in the new communities should include household assets inventory as a benchmark for improvements and additions which may result from engaging in a value chain.